IN THE CLAIMS

Please substitute claims 1-31 with the following:

1-16.   (Cancelled).

17.   (Currently Amended)   A method for accounting for a fee concerning service provided to a user by a service provider to a user, comprising the steps of:

receiving from said service provider a charge collection request based on a service request sent from the user to said service provider, said service request including service request data;

informing said charge collection to the user of a charge collection based on said charge collection request received from said service provider; and

when an objection to the fee is received from the user, verifying validity of the charge collection based on said service request data and digital signature data, said digital signature data being generated based on said service request data,

wherein,

the service request[[s]] data and the digital signature data for verifying are provided via a storage medium connectable to a user terminal,

the digital signature data is created from a name of the user and an account number of the user using the user terminal, and

wherein information stored on the storage medium cannot be modified using software techniques.

18.   (Currently Amended) The method according to the claim 17, wherein the service request data and the digital signature data for verifying are provided from the user.

19.   (Cancelled).

20.   (Currently Amended)   The method according to claim 17, wherein the service request data and the digital signature data for verifying are provided from the service provider.

21.   (Currently Amended)   A system for accounting for a fee concerning service provided to a user by a service provider to a user, comprising:

means for receiving from said service provider a charge collection request based on a service request sent from the user to said service provider, said service request including service request data;

means for informing said charge collection to the user of a charge collection based on said charge collection request received from said service provider; and

means for verifying validity of the charge collection [[,]] based on said service request data and digital signature data, said digital signature data being generated based on said service request data, when an objection to the fee is received from the user,

wherein,

the service request[[s]] data and the digital signature data for verifying are provided via a storage medium connectable to a user terminal,

the digital signature data is created from a name of the user and an account number of the user using the user terminal, and

wherein information stored on the storage medium cannot be modified using software techniques.

22.   (Currently Amended)   The system according to claim 21, wherein the service request data and the digital signature data for verifying are provided from the user.

23.   (Cancelled).

24.   (Currently Amended)   The system according to claim 21, wherein the service request <u>data</u> and the digital signature <u>data</u> for verifying are provided from the service provider.

25.   (Currently Amended)   A system for accounting for a fee concerning service provided to a user by a service provider to a user, comprising:

an accounting terminal for receiving from said service provider a charge collection request based on a service request sent from the user to said service provider, <u>said service request</u> <u>including service request data,</u> wherein the accounting terminal

informs ~~said charge collection to~~ the user <u>of a charge collection</u> based on said charge collection request received from said service provider, and

when an objection to the fee is received from the user, verifies validity of the charge <u>collection</u> based on said service request <u>data</u> and digital signature <u>data, said digital signature data</u> <u>being</u> generated based on said service request <u>data,</u>

wherein<u>,</u>

the service request[[s]] and the digital signature <u>data</u> for verifying are provided via a storage medium connectable to a user terminal,

<u>the digital signature data is created from a name of the user and an account number of the</u> <u>user using the user terminal, and</u>

~~wherein~~ information stored on the storage medium cannot be modified using software techniques.

26.   (Currently Amended)   The system according to claim 25, wherein the service request <u>data</u> and the digital signature <u>data</u> for verifying are provided from the user.

27.   (Cancelled).

28.   (Currently Amended)   The system according to claim 25, wherein the service request <u>data</u> and the digital signature <u>data</u> for verifying are provided from the service provider.

29.   (Previously Presented)   The method according to the claim 17, wherein the storage medium comprises hardware.

30.   (Previously Presented)   The method according to the claim 21, wherein the storage medium comprises hardware.

31.   (Previously Presented)   The method according to the claim 25, wherein the storage medium comprises hardware.